

# Stanly County and the City of Albemarle

Branding & Marketing Study

Request for Proposals

Released October 14 2013

Due November 15, 2013

## 1. Project Description

Stanly County (population 60,636) and the City of Albemarle (population 15,869) are interested in creating a marketing plan and developing a brand for the County and City respectively. Neither entity has a consistent brand image. Both entities would like to utilize the brand image to further promote its economic development plans to drive business expansion, new business relocation, tourism, small business development and enhance general perceptions about assets in the community.

In some respects, Stanly County and the City of Albemarle are hidden gems due to their location in the eastern most section of the Charlotte-metro region. With no interstate or restricted access highway connectivity, the communities in Stanly County are often overlooked. However, the communities in the western most sections of Stanly County are only minutes from I-485 which offers businesses and residents alike quick access to all of the amenities of a large urban center without the drawbacks of high traffic volume, taxes and land prices.

Stanly County has numerous assets and amenities. Stanly Community College has campuses in both Albemarle and Locust and is highly regarded for its allied health and incumbent workforce training programs. As a part of the growing Charlotte region, with roots in the manufacturing and agribusiness sectors, Stanly County takes pride in its ability to offer easy access to the outstanding services, business resources and amenities available in this market as well as those available in North Carolina's other major metropolitan areas (e.g. Charlotte, the Triad and Raleigh). Our cities, towns and communities offer an exceptional quality of life and a variety of different living environments, an established cluster of vineyards, lake recreation and multiple tourist attractions. Combine this with the advantages of lower real estate costs, a lower cost of living, a skilled and motivated workforce and a supportive and cooperative business climate and you have an environment ripe for economic success.

Albemarle was incorporated in 1857 and has a population of 16,000. For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Albemarle had a thriving textile and apparel industry that was the cornerstone of its economy. Since the decline of the textile industry in the United States over the past couple of decades, the City has been trying to diversify and to reinvent itself.

Albemarle is the County seat of Stanly County and serves as the governmental, business, medical, and retail hub of the County and beyond. The City has a beautiful downtown area that is situated on the crest of a hill. The downtown has a large collection of early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial buildings, many of which have been restored. The City is served by a wide variety of restaurants, motels, and retail businesses that cater to residents and visitors. The City is home to Stanly Regional Medical Center and Stanly Community College. Albemarle is a full service City offering electric, water, sewer and landfill utilities, and prides itself on its excellent customer service.

The purpose behind creating a new marketing and branding campaign is to promote the positive aspects of doing business, living or visiting Stanly County and/or the City of Albemarle to those within and outside the Charlotte region. The goal is to increase awareness of the amenities in our communities to drive business decisions, tourist visits and encourage folks to move to, or return to Stanly County or the City of Albemarle to live and raise a family.

For more information about Stanly County or the City of Albemarle see the enclosed community profiles.

## **2. Project Requirements**

Under the contract to be awarded through this RFP, Stanly County and the City of Albemarle, NC seek the development of respective “brands” that are exclusive, yet symbiotic in nature. Additionally, each entity seeks recommendations for funding, developing, and conducting a sustainable branding campaign. The contract requires a professional, experienced organization to analyze existing data, conduct and interpret research, and demonstrate the ability to work with a wide-variety of citizens and stakeholders to seek community support for the branding effort. Stanly County and the City of Albemarle have already established specific economic development strategies that must be supported by the brand image.

## **3. Scope of Work**

- Conduct qualitative and quantitative research to determine the current positioning (assets, strengths, attitudes, perceptions, opportunities and challenges) of the community. Evaluate the environment, the competitive situation, community attitudes, and perceptions of target audiences.
- Develop a creative “look” to bring the community’s current economic strategies, assets and amenities to life for both Stanly County and the City of Albemarle respectively. Recommend the specific and necessary elements to deliver the message including logo design, print collateral, print advertising, digital media including website design, public relations, social media, events, etc.
- Develop strategies and tactical plans to position the messaging based on research and analysis.
- Define how the core message can be expanded to existing economic development and visitor initiatives as well as broader regional partners and assets.

## **4. Deliverables**

- Monthly reports outlining significant meetings, discussions, actions, and results (electronic PDF)
- Final presentation of proposed brand identity for both Stanly County and the City of Albemarle respectively including creative work and action plan (County Commission, City Council and Public)
- Final report including all elements outlined in scope of work (1 Electronic PDF, 20 hard copies for each organizational entity)
- Implementation action plan and schedule for brand integration and sustainability (1 Electronic PDF, 20 hard copies for each organizational entity)
- Camera-ready logo with and without tagline, including customizations for specific elements developed during process (Color and B/W versions, Electronic GIF format)
- Camera-ready stationery
- Graphic standards guide

## 5. Submission Guidelines

- **Qualifications:** Provide a statement of your qualifications. Identify your firm's capability and experience on similar assignments, particularly for small, rural counties and/or municipalities. Include a description of the firm, its organizational structure, the location of principal offices and the office and staff that would be responsible for managing this project.
- **Philosophy:** Provide a statement describing your firm's unique attributes in the area of community branding.
- **Scope of Work:** Provide details regarding how your firm will accomplish/fulfill the scope of work.
- **References:** List at least three (3) recent (past 24 months) clients for whom similar or comparable services have been performed. Include the name and contact information for their primary representative. Describe each project's outcomes and the process your company took to achieve those outcomes.
- **Project Team:** List the key personnel and their individual responsibilities on this assignment including related experience.
- **Proposed Budget:** Define the total estimated contract amount associated with the branding for both Stanly County and the City of Albemarle respectively.
- **Time Line:** Place the proposed scope of work within a time line.
- **Appendix:** You may include no more than 3 extra pages of information about additional case studies, samples, or testimonials.

## 6. Submission Instructions

The County Manager, City Manager (and/or designee), Economic Development Director and a select committee comprised of elected officials from both organizations will review all submissions. Applicants may be contacted for phone or in-person interviews by the selection committee. The committee will then recommend a firm to both the Board of County Commissioners and City Council for final contract approval.

The applicant will submit ten (10) hard copies of the proposals for review to the following:

City of Albemarle  
PO Box 190  
Albemarle, NC 28002  
Reference: County and City Marketing and Branding Study  
Submissions must be postmarked by November 15, 2013

Applicants are encouraged to review the Stanly County, City of Albemarle and Stanly County Economic Development Commission websites ([www.stanlycountync.gov](http://www.stanlycountync.gov), [www.stanlyedc.org](http://www.stanlyedc.org), [www.ci.albemarle.nc.us](http://www.ci.albemarle.nc.us))

Any questions related to the City of Albemarle should be directed to Ray Allen, City Manager (704) 984-9405 or [rallen@ci.albemarle.nc.us](mailto:rallen@ci.albemarle.nc.us) and questions related to Stanly County should be directed to Andy Lucas, County Manager at (704) 986-3600 or [alucas@stanlycountync.gov](mailto:alucas@stanlycountync.gov).



## Albemarle, North Carolina

## Community Profile

Albemarle is located in the beautiful Uwharrie Lakes region of North Carolina. North of Charlotte on NC 24-27 and south of the Piedmont Triad on US 52, Albemarle is between two of the largest growing metro regions in the South. Large companies like International Automotive Components (IAC) and Preformed Line Products (PLP) along with small businesses thrive in the pro-business environment developed through private-public partnerships. Albemarle's secrets to preserving a small town quality of life are being discovered by tourists and retirees. We invite you to visit and see why people and businesses choose to call Albemarle home.

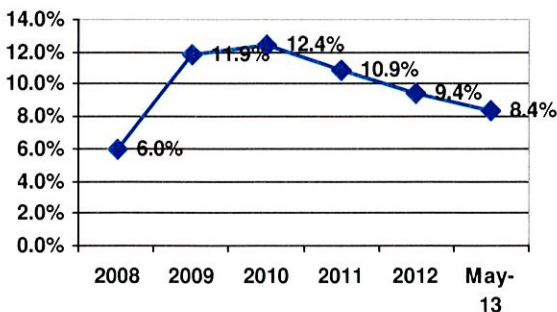
### Population

	2010	Median Household Income
City of Albemarle	15,903	34,391 (2007-2011)
Stanly County	60,585	43,424 (2007-2011)
Charlotte	731,424	53,146 (2007-2011)

US Census Bureau

**Stanly County Labor Force:** 30,479 (May 2013)

**Stanly County Unemployment Rate:** 8.4% (May 2013)



NC Employment Security Commission

### Transportation

Albemarle is located on US 52 and NC 24-27 northeast of Charlotte. The city's transportation network provides quick access the Piedmont Triad and Charlotte regions of NC. The Albemarle Stanly County Airport serves private aircraft. Charlotte Douglas Int'l Airport is about 49 miles away and Piedmont Triad Int'l Airport is just over 75 miles away.

### Taxes

	2012
City of Albemarle	\$0.56
Stanly County	\$0.67

\*Per \$100 Valuation



**Courthouse Square Park**

### Albemarle's Largest Employers

<u>Employer</u>	<u>Product/Service</u>
Stanly Regional Medical Center	Education & Health Services
IAC Group North America	Automotive Trimmings, Apparel
Wal-Mart	Retail
Monarch	Health Services



City of Albemarle  
PO Box 190, Albemarle, NC 28002-0190  
704-984-9400 Fax: 704-984-9445 [www.ci.albemarle.nc.us.com](http://www.ci.albemarle.nc.us.com)



**Utilities**

Service	Provider
Water/Wastewater	City of Albemarle
Electric	City of Albemarle Duke Power
Natural Gas	NCNG
Telecommunications	Windstream
Rail Service	Winston Salem Southbound Norfolk Southern

**Downtown Albemarle****Education and Training**

Albemarle is served by the Stanly County Public School System and Stanly Community College (SCC), which is part of the North Carolina Community College System, rated first in the nation for industry support and training. The Business and Industry Training Program, offered by SCC, provides training assistance to support full-time production and direct customer service positions created in the State of North Carolina, thereby enhancing the growth potential of companies located in the state while simultaneously preparing North Carolina's workforce with the skills essential to successful employment in emerging industries.

Pfeiffer University is a comprehensive, United Methodist-related university, with multiple campuses and delivery systems, committed to educational excellence, service, and scholarship. The University offers Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in a range of disciplines. Graduate degrees are offered in business, healthcare, education and organizational change and leadership.

In the greater Charlotte region there are many institutions of higher learning including the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Queens College, Belmont Abbey College, Wingate, Johnson C. Smith University, and others.

**Quality of Life**

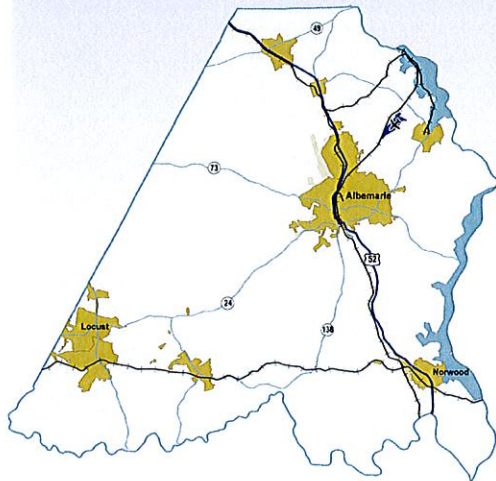
Stanly Regional Medical Center (SRMC), a Customer Service Award winner, provides quality healthcare to Albemarle and the surrounding area.

The Albemarle area has much to offer outdoor enthusiasts. Morrow Mountain State Park, Badin Lake, Lake Tillery, City Lake Park, and a direct connection to the Carolina Thread Trail are just a few of the local attractions.

The Stanly County Museum is located in downtown Albemarle and some of the county's best art and cultural works can be found at the local art gallery or the Stanly County Agri-Civic Center.

**Stanly Regional Medical Center**





Stanly County is located 45 miles northeast of Charlotte in the Uwharrie Lakes Region of the state. It has been described as the "Central Park of North Carolina." The area is rich in cultural, historical, natural and recreational assets.

Stanly County boasts a low tax rate, substantial economic development incentives for new or expanding businesses, and a strong "right-to-work" philosophy. As a result, Stanly County presents a truly business-friendly and productive environment for corporate relocation or expansion.

Educational assets in Stanly County include Pfeiffer University, which offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in business and liberal arts concentrations; Stanly Community College, which offers a variety of associates degrees, diploma programs and training programs linked to local industry needs; and the Stanly County Schools System in which seven schools were designated as Schools of Distinction and 100 as Schools of Excellence.



Total Population, 2012	61,467
Total Households, 2012	23,862
Median Age, 2012	41.0
Projected Population, 2017	62,649

#### Educational Attainment, 2011

Population 25 and Older	40,941
High School Diploma	35.3%
Some College	20.4%
Associate's Degree	8.8%
Bachelor's Degree	10.7%
Graduate or Professional Degree	4.3%
2012 SAT score, county average	1,549
2012 SAT score, state average	1,469

#### Income, 2012

Median Household Income	\$42,362
Per Capita Income	\$21,869

#### Employment by Industry, 2013

Agriculture, Mining	3.4%
Construction	6%
FIRE	6.9%
Manufacturing	12.3%
Public Administration	15.1%
Retail Trade	12.6%
Wholesale Trade	2.1%
Services	40%
Transportation, Utilities	1.6%
Total Employment, 16+	25,608

#### Labor Force, 2012

Labor Force	30,479
Unemployment Rate	8.4%

Source: ESRI 2012, NC Dept of Public Education, NC ESC

A wide variety of industry is represented throughout Stanly County, from manufacturers of power transmission components and hydraulic hoses to textiles and aircraft parts and equipment. Major employers in the region consist of industry leaders such as IAC Group, North America, Michelin Aircraft Tires Corporation, Clayton Schult Homes, Fiber Composites LLC, and American Fiber & Finishing.

Stanly County includes an abundance of affordable greenfield and industrial sites, four of which have attained North Carolina certified status. This certification includes a proactive analysis of site development costs, environmental issues and utility service. The process also identifies committed partners for future development projects.



Power Park, one of the North Carolina certified sites, offers a graded site for a 200,000SF industrial building, a fully designed virtual spec building with nearby rail access, redundant electrical power and on-site power generation to prevent brownouts and blackouts. The site sits adjacent to the Stanly County Airport, which features a 5,500-foot runway and a sophisticated Instrument Landing System that can accommodate

military cargo jets and more than 60 private, corporate jets.

#### MAJOR EMPLOYERS (non government/retail)

Company	Major Product	Employees
Michelin Aircraft Tire Co LLC	Tires & Inner Tubes	353
IAC Group, North America	Automotive Trimmings, Apparel	336
Clayton Schult Homes	Mobile Homes	300
Monarch	Education & Health Services	235
Fiber Composites LLC	Manufacturing	225



## Contact Information:

**Paul Stratos**  
**Stanly County Economic Development**  
**Commission**  
**1000 North First Street, Suite 11**  
**Albemarle, NC 28001**  
**704.986.3682**  
**www.stanlyedc.org**  
**pstratos@stanlyedc.org**

## Contact Information:

**David Swenson**  
**Charlotte Regional Partnership**  
**550 S. Caldwell Street, Suite 760**  
**704.347.8942**  
**www.charlotteusa.com**  
**dswenson@charlotteusa.com**



## Announced Jobs & Investments

Jobs announced, since 2008	1,067
Total investment announced, since 2008	\$59,900,000

## Accessibility

Nearest Major City	Charlotte
Distance to Nearest Major City	12.6 miles
Nearest Commercial Airport	CLT
Runway Length	10,000 ft
Distance to Nearest Airport	30.8 miles
Nearest Interstate	I-485
Distance to Nearest Interstate	11.5 miles
Nearest Deepwater Port	Port of Charleston
Distance to Nearest Deepwater Port	213 miles
Foreign Trade Zone Accessibility	Yes
Population within 50 mile radius, 2010	2,603,079

## Development Capacity

Wastewater Treatment Capacity Available	Yes
Natural Gas Available	Yes

## Taxes, Sales & Service

Property Taxes/\$100 value (2011-12)	\$0.6700
Taxable Retail Sales (Mil\$, 2011-12)	\$428.7
Number of Physicians, 2011	82
Physicians per 10,000 population, 2011	13.5
RN per 10,000 population, 2011	71.1
Dentists per 10,000 population, 2011	2.6

Sources: County data and NC Department of Revenue

## Average Weekly Wage 2012

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	\$598
Utilities	\$1,385
Construction	\$703
Manufacturing	\$780
Wholesale Trade	\$811
Retail Trade	\$449
Transportation & Warehousing	\$895
Information	\$852
Finance & Insurance	\$1,100
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	\$554
Professional & Technical Services	\$846
Management of Companies & Enterprises	\$877
Administrative & Waste Services	\$440
Educational Services	\$628
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$590
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	\$224
Accommodation & Food Services	\$242
Public Administration	\$691
Average Weekly Wage	\$607

## Unemployment Insurance

New Employers (per \$100)	1.2%
Deficit Employers (max rate)	6.84%
Minimum Tax Rate	0%
Taxable Base	\$20,400

## Inventory Tax

Finished Goods	none
Raw Materials	none
Goods in Process	none
Mat'l consumed in Mfg.	none

## Sales Tax, General

State	4.75%
Local	2.0%

## Sales Tax, Special Provisions

Electricity (farms and manufacturing exempt)	3.0%
Natural Gas	% of receipts
Manufacturing Fuels	none
Manufacturing Equipment	none
Telecomm Service: Intrastate (state + county)	7%

## Education

Public Schools	25
Private Schools	2
School Districts	1
Colleges & Universities	3